

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEHRAN 07468 080454Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 /011 W
-----127001 080459Z /12
R 071220Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9687

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 7468

STADIS//////////

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: IR
SUBJ: RUMORS

REF: A. STATE 198159, B. TEHRAN 7043

1. FOR NEA/IRN ONLY. IT APPEARS TO US THAT AMERICAN SOURCES ARE FINALLY CATCHING UP WITH THE RUMORS WHICH I PASSED TO YOU PREVIOUSLY. THERE IS NOTHING NEW IN THIS FRONT EXCEPT A PERSISTENT REFRAIN THAT THE SHAH'S HEALTH MAY NOT BE AS GOOD AS DESIRED. THERE IS, HOWEVER, NO BASIS IN FACT FOR THIS LINGERING STORY TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE.

2. SHAH DELIVERED VIDEOTAPED CONSTITUTION DAY SPEECH AUG 5 AND APPEARED IN GOOD HEALTH. SENIOR PRESSMAN WHO WAS PRESENT FOR AT LEAST PART OF FILMING LATE LAST WEEK SAID SHAH LOOKED IN EXCELLENT HEALTH AND DISPLAYED GOOD SENSE OF HUMOR. MOST LOCAL NEWSMEN BEGINNING TO DISCOUNT RUMORS AND SEE THEM AS WORK OF OPPOSITIONISTS, BUT FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC. IRANIAN OFFICIAL, WHEN CONFRONTED BY RUMORS OF SHOOTING IN LEG AS LATE AS AUG 1 OR 2, REMARKED RATHER DRYLY THAT SHAH DID NOT SEEM TO BE SUFFERING MUCH DURING IMPROMPTU NOWSHAHR VOLLEYBALL GAME PRIOR TO A MINISTERIAL AUDIENCE NEAR THE END OF LAST WEEK.

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3. COMMITTED RUMORMONGERS HERE, OF COURSE, EVEN INSIST THIS IS PART OF COURT COVERUP, WITH SHAH TAPING CONSTITUTION SPEECH TWO MONTHS PREVIOUSLY. RAPIDITY WITH WHICH RUMORS HAVE CHANGED TO AVOID REALITY HAS BEEN TRULY IMPRESSIVE. BLOC DIPLOMATS ALSO CONTINUE TO DISSEMINATE RUMORS. JUST RECENTLY BULGARIAN CHARGE GAVE ME SONG

AND DANCE ABOUT SHAH'S ILL-HEALTH. UNFORTUNATELY, SOME
AMERICAN CITIZENS ARE AS PRONE TO "RUMOR RECONSOLIDATION"
TOO, AND THIS MAY BE SOURCE OF "CONFIRMATIONS," WHICH
KEEP STORIES CYCLING IN U.S.

4. OUR BASIC LINE REMAINS THAT GIVEN IN REF B.
NAAS

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, HEALTH, HEAD OF GOVERNMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TEHRAN07468
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780323-1034
Format: TEL
From: TEHRAN
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780890/aaaacxoo.tel
Line Count: 69
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 71569a67-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY, STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY, STADIS
Reference: 78 STATE 198159, 78 TEHRAN 7043
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1815052
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RUMORS
TAGS: PINT, IR, (PAHLAVI, MOHAMMED REZA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/71569a67-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014